AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1.   (Currently Amended) A universal optical disc player, comprising:

a disc drive with associated drive controller;

a processor coupled to said drive controller;

signal processing circuitry coupled to said processor and having an output port for coupling to a media presentation device;

a memory coupled to said processor having a data structure defined therein;

said data structure comprising an operating system having an associated virtual machine that provides an environment to host an auto-run playback program obtained from an optical disc placed in said disc drive;

said operating system and said auto-run playback program executing under said operating system to collectively-provide control instructions to said processor to cause said processor to access media content from said optical disc and supply said media content to said signal processing circuitry for output to said media presentation device,

wherein said media content includes an embedded active agent program and said auto-run playback program interacts with said active agent program to effect copy protection by altering media playback procedure.

2.   (Cancelled)

3.   (Cancelled)

4.   (Original) The disc player of claim 1 wherein said data structure further comprises media support data used by said virtual machine in the event an auto-run program is not obtained from said optical disc.

5.   (Cancelled)

6.   (Currently Amended) A method of distributing media content, comprising:

placing an auto-run playback program on a machine-readable vehicle that also embodies said media content;

supplying said machine-readable vehicle to a playback system;

loading said auto-run playback program into said playback system in response to said supplying step; and

using said loaded auto-run playback program to access and supply said media content through a media presentation device coupled to said playback system,

wherein said media content includes an embedded active agent program and said auto-run playback program interacts with said active agent program to effect copy protection by altering media playback procedure.

7.   (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said machine-readable vehicle is an optical disc.

8.   (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said machine-readable vehicle is a memory device.

9.   (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said machine-readable vehicle is a carrier wave propagated over a communications network.

10.   (Cancelled)

11.   (Cancelled)

12.   (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said step of using said loaded auto-run playback program comprises providing a virtual machine within an operating system of a media player and executing said auto-run playback program from within said virtual machine.

13.   (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said playback system is a disc player and said supplying step is performed by placing a disc containing said auto-run playback program in said disc player.

14.   (Original) The method of claim 6 further comprising supplying legacy media playback program and using said legacy media playback program in the event said auto-run playback program is not present on said media.

15.   (New)   The disc player of claim 1, wherein said active agent program is uniquely developed to work with said auto-run program.

16.   (New)   The method of claim 6, further comprising uniquely developing said active agent program to work with said auto-run program.